

IOOS Fall Regional Coordination Workshop
Breakout Session 3
Tuesday, November 7, 2006
1:00 p.m. to 4:45 p.m.

Relationships Between Regional Associations and Federal Agencies in the Pursuit of an Integrated Ocean Observing System (IOOS)

The First IOOS Development Plan calls for a coastal component of IOOS comprised of two parts—a federal component and a network of regional systems. Together, they will form a seamless system that will provide the observations, information products, and model outputs necessary to meet the stated societal goals.

Problem Statement: How do we foster effective relationships between RAs and the federal agencies at national, regional, and state levels?

Needed Outcome: An action plan with specific next steps that include responsible parties and achievable time frames to ensure positive interactions between RAs and federal agencies at national, regional, and state levels. These specific steps will maximize opportunities for collaboration and minimize conflicts, as we jointly pursue the IOOS goals.

Groups: See attached sheet for breakout groupings

I. Groups A and B: The relationship between RAs and state agencies and regional branches of federal agencies

1. How do we engage RAs in the activities of the local federal agencies?
 - a. Proactively seek RA input on federal agency plans (for example, NDBC sought RA priorities for instrumenting buoys with below-surface instruments)
 - b. Accommodate RA participation in federal agency governance and planning structures (for example, including West Coast RAs in NMFS' PaCOOS project)
 - c. What about Regional Ocean Governance initiatives (e.g., Gulf of Mexico Alliance, Alaska Marine Ecosystem Forum, and activities in the Northeast and Southeast U.S.)?
2. How do we engage the local federal agency offices in the activities of the RAs?
 - a. Establish RA governance structures that accommodate federal participation (federal agencies as voting members, nonvoting, etc.)
 - b. Proactively seek local federal agency input on RA plans
3. What are the real or potential “disconnects” or barriers in these interactions?
 - a. Inertia, agency cultures
 - b. Funding (limits travel, participation, communication)
 - i. Legal restrictions
 - ii. Administrative and geographic boundaries (differ by agency)

- iii. Personalities and politics
 - iv. Agency IOOS activities undertaken without input/involvement of RAs (such as in-house IOOS projects at federal agencies undertaken without sufficient regard to RA plans or input from RAs)
 - v. Initiatives to redefine/restructure/reorganize federal agency program areas and their missions under IOOS undertaken in ways that compete or conflict with RA plans
 - vi. RA initiatives (e.g., pilot projects) undertaken that compete with or duplicate federal initiatives or future plans
- 4. What actions can be taken or processes put in place to enhance interactions and improve coordination?
 - a. Formal recognition and certification of RAs with clearly defined roles and responsibilities for both RAs and federal agencies
 - b. Federal agency representatives (with appropriate decision-making authority) participating in RA governance and planning structures
 - c. RA representatives (with appropriate decision-making authority) participating in IOOS-related federal agency planning to the extent allowed by law and agency policy (federal advisory committees, other?)
 - i. Inclusion of RA funding in federal agency budgets at the national level

II. Groups C and D: The relationship between RAs and the federal agencies at the national level

- 1. How do we engage RAs in the activities of federal agencies at the national level?
 - a. Ensure RA membership on ORRAP and SIMOR state/federal task force
 - b. Provide for ad hoc NFRA/RA participation at IWGOO
 - c. Ensure national leadership of federal agencies are well-educated on IOOS and roles and responsibilities of RAs
 - d. Provide directives from national leadership to regional leadership that will require RA input/participation
- 2. How do we engage the national offices of the federal agencies in the activities of the RAs?
 - a. Develop formal relationships between RAs and NFRA and IWGOO federal agencies
 - b. Establish RA or NFRA governance structures that accommodate federal participation
 - c. Proactively seek federal agency input to RA and NFRA plans
 - d. Ensure adequate RA and federal agency participation on national IOOS steering teams, committees, work groups, etc.
- 3. What are the real or potential “disconnects” or barriers in these interactions?
 - a. Inertia, agency cultures
 - b. Funding (limits travel, participation, communication)

- c. Legal restrictions
 - d. Administrative and geographic boundaries (differ by agency)
 - e. Lack of knowledge among key federal agency personnel about roles and responsibilities of RAs
 - f. Federal agency activities without input from RAs (e.g., in-house IOOS projects at federal agencies undertaken without sufficient regard to RA plans and without RA input)
 - g. Initiatives to redefine/restructure/reorganize federal agency program areas and their missions under IOOS undertaken in ways that compete or conflict with RA plans
 - h. RA initiatives (e.g., pilot projects) undertaken that compete with or duplicate federal initiatives
4. What actions can be taken or processes put in place to enhance interactions and improve coordination?
- a. Formal recognition and certification of RAs with clearly defined roles and responsibilities for both RAs and federal agencies
 - b. Participation of federal agency representatives (with appropriate decision-making authority) in RA or NFRA governance and planning structures
 - c. Participation of NFRA representatives (with appropriate decision-making authority) in IOOS-related federal agency planning and governance structures to the extent allowed by law and agency policy
 - d. Input from RAs (through NFRA?) in federal agency budgetary planning. Coordination between RA budget priorities and individual agency budget priorities.